F 74
.W9 C45
Copy 1

WORCESTER'S NORTH END

THE NATHAN PATCH HOUSE

THE HENCHMAN FARM

BY

CHARLES A. CHASE

UNITED STATES ARMS

Market Street

NATHAN PATCH HOUSE

WORCESTER'S NORTH END.

THE NATHAN PATCH HOUSE.

THE HENCHMAN FARM.

Two Papers read before the Worcester Society of Antiquity on November 4, 1902, and December 2, 1902.

BY

CHARLES A. CHASE.

Worcester, Mass.

PRESS OF CHARLES HAMILTON,

No. 311 Main Street.

1903.

By transfer

JI 25 19 7

In Exchange
Amer. Anth. Soc.
25 JI 1907

THE NATHAN PATCH HOUSE AND NORTH END OF MAIN STREET.

An unpretentious house of two stories, which had stood at the south corner of Main and Market streets for nearly one hundred and twenty years, has just been demolished. Its only peculiarity was the frieze of the door-finish, remarkable for its bass-relief of a human face. The door-frame entire is now in the Museum of this Society.[1] The frieze is an example of English renaissance of the time of the Georges, or the architecture which in this country is called "colonial." Pediment ornamentation is often found in old colonial work, but is generally much simpler than in the case before us. The use of glass, in a frame in the form of a geometrical arc resting upon a chord, is quite common. Sometimes the ornament is a wreath. Heads are rare, but our talented architect, Mr. Stephen C. Earle, has shown me an illustration of a head on the east interior wall of Independence Hall at Philadelphia, from which it is possible that this Worcester head was copied. Who was the carpenter or architect who reproduced the Philadelphia head in Worcester, is a question which it is doubtless impossible to answer. He never dreamed that in the twentieth century his handiwork would be deposited as an historic relic in the basement of a substantial brick edifice out on what he would have called "Mr. Salisbury's farm."

The owner of this house, for whom it was built, was Mr. Nathan Patch. While a resident of Ipswich he had

[1] The gift of the Society's greatest benefactor, the Hon. Stephen Salisbury.

married Lucy Adams of Worcester, on Dec. 26, 1760. He probably came to Worcester about twelve years later; for his first purchase of real estate was a farm of two hundred and fifty acres in the north part of the town, next to the Holden line, on Jan. 8, 1773. His children, apparently six in number, were probably born before his coming here, for none of their names appear in this town's record of births.

The lot on which this house stood was at the southwest corner of a tract of three and one-half acres, conveyed to Mr. Patch by Daniel Heywood on May 10, 1783. This tract was part of a forty-acre lot granted by the Proprietors "for the minister at Worcester," May 20, 1714.[1] In some way which I have not been able to discover, the forty-acre lot came into possession of William Jennison soon after his coming to Worcester from Watertown in 1725 or 1726. Mr. Jennison, it may be said here, became at once a very prominent citizen, holding many town offices and frequently presiding at the town meetings. Although he was not trained to the law he was made one of the Justices of the Inferior Court of Common Pleas and General Sessions on the organization of the county in 1731, and held the office during his life.

After Mr. Jennison's death so much of his estate as lay on the east side of Main street[2] running nearly to Summer street, was sold on execution to Jacob Wendell, who conveyed it to Mr. Jennison's four sons-in-law, Thomas Stearns, William Johnson, David Baldwin and Luke Brown, and it was partitioned among them. Thomas Stearns bought out the other three, and conveyed most of it to Samuel Brown, who sold it to Abel Heywood, son of the first Daniel Heywood. After Abel's death there was a partition of his estate, and the south portion of this Jennison tract was assigned to his son Daniel. Daniel Heywood conveyed it

[1] Proprietors' Records, p. 72.

[2] The probate inventory of Mr. Jennison's estate included one lot of ten acres and seventy rods on the east side of Main street, bounded west by the road, south by Heywood, east by Chandler and north by Thomas Stearns.

to Nathan Patch in 1783. The Main street line was fourteen rods, and the tract extended easterly nearly to Summer street. Mr. Patch very soon began to build the tavern-house, now called the Exchange Hotel, which was completed in 1784. He was its proprietor until 1793, and during the interval built the dwelling-house of which we are now treating, which was his home until his death in the summer of 1808. His will names the following children and heirs: Hannah March (widow of Tappan); Sarah Porter (widow of Samuel); Lucy Patch; sons Henry and Joseph, who with Theophilus Wheeler were executors of his will; and the children of a deceased son Joshua. To Sarah Porter he gave the house in which he lived, with the lot now stripped, running back on "the lane to tanyard" as far as the "east line of barn yard shed" or, according to subsequent conveyances, about one hundred and fourteen feet. Mrs. Porter lived in the house, or the north part of it, until her death in 1858. In May, 1835, she conveyed to Osgood Bradley the fee of the south part of the estate, the line running through the front door and to the rear of the lot.

In Mrs. Porter's will, probated Aug. 2, 1858, she left remembrances to her grandson William (son of Nathaniel), and her granddaughter Mary (daughter of Rufus and wife of Sewall Holbrook). Her real estate she left to her son Samuel A., and daughter Frances H. Putnam, one-third each, and the remaining third to her daughter Eliza (widow of Jeremiah Healey), and the latter's daughter Harriet Draper. Samuel A. Porter bought Mrs. Putnam's share in 1860, and the other share in 1863. Mrs. Draper as Miss Healey taught some of us our *a b c*'s in the little "North Infant" school-house, 22 by 22, on the west side of Summer street near its north end.

Mr. Porter sold his half of the Main street lot to Harrison Bliss in 1863, and three years later the latter bought Mr. Bradley's portion, selling the estate at the same time to

Samuel Stratton for $12,000. Mr Stratton's face was a familiar one on that corner for more than thirty years, but for a few years past he has lived with a daughter on Forest street.

The latest events in the history of this estate are the conveyance by Mr. Stratton, in July last, to Mr. Charles L. Gates, and a deed from Mr. Gates to the Worcester Consolidated Street Railway Company.

In the tracing of a title like the foregoing, through the Registries of Deeds and of Probate, one finds a variety of collateral information and calls up a host of personal reminiscences. "The lane leading to the tanyard," mentioned in Mr. Patch's will, was laid out by himself over his own land. His daughter, Mrs. Porter, called it "Tanyard street," and I can remember when in the mouths of men and boys it was styled "Pig Lane." When it became a town street, extended to Summer street, it was called "Old Market street," [1] for the present Exchange street (originally called "Columbian avenue"), was then called Market street, and so styled as late as 1843, when the "York House" on the south corner of Main street, with the Worcester Bank building next south, were destroyed by fire. It was probably only a little later that Market street became Exchange street, and Old Market street ceased to be called "old."

I have often wondered why School street should have been so named; but my recent investigations have solved the problem. The Patch tract extended on Main street to a point about one hundred and twenty-five feet north of School street. Mr. Patch subsequently purchased the land on the south of this, and in 1808 the executors of Mr. Patch sold to Moses Wing a lot on the north side of "Terry street." [2]

[1] Mr. Thomas C. Rice, in the *Sunday Spy* of Nov. 9, 1902, says that the name (Old) Market street came from a market which was kept, at one time, in the back part or half-basement of the tavern. Mr. Rice's article gives a valuable geographical and historical description of Bimeleck, or Mill, brook through its whole course.

[2] Book 172, p. 47.

In 1816 the administrator of David Curtis's estate sold to Levi Howe[4] a tract bounded on the north by "lane to tanyard," on the east by "lane to School-house street" and on the south by Schoolhouse street. In November, 1820, Elijah Burbank, Oliver Fiske, Jeremiah Robinson, William Eaton and Theophilus Wheeler,—all prominent citizens,—sold to Henry M. Sikes[2] a lot on the north side of the street, with a building which they had previously bought to maintain a private school. This school evidently gave a name to the street. Mr. Sikes three years later conveyed the lot to Alexander Gaspard Vottier, the French follower of Napoleon, of whom you have been told in the papers of Major Stiles, Mrs. Sturgis, Henry H. Chamberlin and others. I have never seen any other reference to the school referred to in this deed. Mr. Patch was himself one of the group of fifty-six citizens who established a private high school on Main street in 1784, which was continued for some fifteen years.

The tannery of which mention has been made, was on the east bank of Mill Brook, just north of the present Market street. The bark mill was run by power furnished by the brook. In 1815 it was advertised for sale, and was apparently abandoned soon after,—taxed to death. The main building was converted into a dwelling-house and so became the "Tanyard House" described in the paper by Major Stiles.[3] The writer used to follow the course of the brook from Lincoln square to School street in the early "forties," on his way to Thomas street school, and there was no trace of a tannery at that time.

Mr. Patch's will gave to his daughter Lucy "the estate in possession of Mr. Henderson." This was the "Green store," so called, just south of his residence. It had been moved on the lot from the east side of Union (or Middle) street, where it was built for a factory. The following

[1] Book 201, p. 524 [2] Book 222, p. 307.
[3] Proceedings of this Society for March, 1900.

named gentlemen, in 1789, had formed an association for the purpose of manufacturing cloths: Daniel Waldo, Daniel Clap, Joseph Allen, Levi Lincoln, Samuel Flagg, Samuel and Charles Chandler, Abel, Peter, Cornelius and Thomas Stowell, John Stanton, Isaiah Thomas, Samuel Brazier, Nathaniel Paine and Daniel Waldo, Jr., all of Worcester; and John Sprague of Lancaster. The land was bought, partly of the Messrs. Chandler and partly of Nathan Patch, and reverted to them on the discontinuance of the factory about two years later.

To Hannah March, widow of Tappan March of Sutton, Mr. Patch gave "the estate on which David Curtis lives." This was the house on the north corner of School street, built by the Hon. Joseph Allen, father of Judge Charles Allen. [Mr. Curtis was grandfather of George William Curtis, and afterward lived on the east side of Lincoln street.] Mrs. March's son Andrew later established a bakery on the premises, and we are told by Lincoln that on Sept. 11, 1834, "the house, bake-house and barn of Andrew March, at the corner of Main and School streets, took fire about midnight and were destroyed. Loss $3,500."

Mr. Osgood Bradley, who bought half of the Patch house in 1835, was a pioneer car builder of the United States. He was at that time engaged in the manufacture of stage-coaches, omnibuses and wagons on the south side of School street, selling out in 1839, and, with Edward B. Rice, establishing the car factory near Washington square which is still conducted by his descendants. It is said that he made some cars on School street for the Boston and Worcester Railroad, perhaps the first cars made in this country. The need of a larger plant led to his removal. In 1845 Mr. Bradley bought the fine mansion on the present site of the "Chase building" on Front street.

Of Nathan Patch himself I can find but little more to say. He was a large holder of real estate, and it is evident that he was public spirited. His name was presented by

the Selectmen at a town meeting in March, 1777, as one of nineteen citizens whom "they esteemed enemies and dangerous." The next town meeting struck out his name, cutting the list down to eight. If he sympathized at one time with the tories he was in the same boat with some of the leading citizens of the town.

Mr. Patch sold his tavern in 1799 to John Farrar. Mr. Farrar conveyed to Thomas Chandler and Daniel Clap in 1804, subject to a lease to William Barker, which was to terminate on May 1, of that year. During that lease it was sometimes styled "Barker's tavern." Clap sold in 1805 to Samuel Johnson, who ran the hotel, but died soon after, and his administrator conveyed to Reuben Sikes in 1807, after which it was known as the Sikes Coffee House, and became famous as the halting place for the stage-coaches which, under the management of Mr. Sikes and Levi Pease, plied between Boston and New York,[1] and which later radiated in all directions from Worcester. Gen. Washington was a guest of the house in 1789, and the Marquis de Lafayette breakfasted there in 1824. Its later history will be found in "Reminiscences of Worcester," by the late Caleb A. Wall, printed in 1877. And here I wish to pay tribute to Mr. Wall for his most valuable services in compiling that work and the subsequent pamphlets treating of the old estates and the old residents of Worcester. The amount of labor required in his task can only be appreciated by those who have followed similar lines of original research, and if he was led into a few errors, the only wonder is that they were so few.

In dealing with the old north end of Worcester village, we are treating of what was its social centre. There John Hancock owned a large estate, to which he was doubtless a frequent visitor.[2] The first Levi Lincoln became the owner of a part, and the first Stephen Salisbury of the

[1] See Lincoln's "History of Worcester," pp. 317-320.

[2] The Henchman and Hancock estates will be the subject of a future paper.

other part of the Governor's farm. Judge John Chandler (the second Judge), built the house now standing at the northeast corner of Lincoln and Belmont streets. Daniel Waldo, father and son, and later the second Levi Lincoln occupied the house as tenants of the Chandler family. Where State street terminates on Court hill lived William Jennison; and Isaiah Thomas's house, now standing in the rear of the Court House, originally stood upon the Court House grounds, the original Court House being just north of it on part of the same grounds. Nathaniel Paine and his son Timothy lived on Lincoln street. All whom I here name were not contemporaries, but they were all of the eighteenth century. On the east side of Main street, beginning at Lincoln square, were Samuel Andrews the tanner; Timothy Bigelow the patriot; Judge Edward Bangs;[1] Joseph Lynde, father and son; Rev. Joseph Wheeler, Register of Probate, and his son and successor, Theophilus Wheeler. Then came the Patch estate, and the homestead of Joseph Allen. Beyond, to the south, was the great Heywood farm, on both sides of Main street, extending nearly to Mechanic street.

Just south of the Jennison house, on the west side of Main street, was the home of Dr. Elijah Dix. Here most of his children were born. His daughter, named (for her mother) Dorothea Lynde Dix, the famous philanthropist, was born in Hampden, Maine, in 1802. Here lived for a time, during the occupation of Boston by the British, the family of Gen. Joseph Warren, one of the heroes of Bunker Hill.[2] South of the Dix house came the Heywood farm.

I must not omit to speak here of the little building which stood in front of the Jennison estate down to 1840 or later. In the upper part a private school for tender youth was

---

[1] His son, Edward D. Bangs, was for twelve years Secretary of this Commonwealth.

[2] For particulars concerning the families named in this connection the reader is referred to Lincoln's "History of Worcester"; and Wall's "Reminiscences."

for several years maintained by Mrs. Jonathan Wood.[1] Mrs. Wood taught previously on the present site of the building of the Worcester Gas Light Company, about opposite Central street, and lastly at No. 2 School street, where we used to go on Saturday afternoons to receive at her hands books from the library of the Worcester Lyceum. She was a charming lady.

CERTAIN WORCESTER STREETS.

Although this paper has to do chiefly with the Market street neighborhood it may not be amiss to treat briefly of some of the other streets, especially of those on the east side of Main street.

A way from Lincoln square to the first burial-place at the present north corner of Summer and Thomas streets, was "prickt" across land which William Jennison and Thomas Palmer afterwards sold to John Chandler, and came to be known as "Back street." It was so called in the town records as late as 1806, but in 1828 was known by its present name, Summer street. In 1809 the executors of Nathan Patch conveyed to Reuben Sikes a tract of seventeen acres and ninety-three rods, "the Frost hill lot,"[2] on the east side of "the road leading from the North meeting house to Grafton." This included the Insane Asylum lot, and was bounded on the south by "the road from the South meeting house to Capt. William Gates's house." The "North meeting house" was the church of the First Unitarian Society at the present north corner of Summer and Heardsleigh streets. The "road from the South meeting house" was laid out in March, 1724, to accommodate the farmers near Lake Quinsigamond. [Pleasant street was laid out in the same year.]

---

[1] My remembrance of its location is confirmed by Henry M. Wheeler and her nephew, Major Frederick G. Stiles.

[2] So named because Samuel Frost was there publicly executed on Oct. 31, 1793, for the murder of Elisha Allen, of Princeton.

Mechanic street as far as Church street, and including the latter to Front street, was opened on the sale of part of the ministerial land in 1785. A year later a committee was appointed and made sales of some thirteen acres east of this tract, and Mechanic street was continued to and through Bridge street to Front street. When it was christened by its present name I do not know.

On Nov. 3, 1806, in town meeting it was

Voted, that the town do approve and allow of a town way or street laid out by the selectmen through the land of Isaiah Thomas, Esq., and Capt. Daniel Heywood by the name of Thomas street, and *Voted*, that the thanks of the town be given to Isaiah Thomas, Esq., for his generosity in giving the land for said street and building the bridge and making the street in complete repair to be travelled on without any expense to the town.

On Nov. 22, 1819, the town accepted the report of the Selectmen laying out as a street or town way, the street leading from Main to Back street and called School street, which had been previously a private way.[1]

Central street was established as a town way in May, 1833, "and as it appears from the records of the town that the road leading from Thomas to School street bears the same name," the said road was named (for the first time) Union street. Union street was extended from Thomas to Mechanic street in 1841.

In August, 1846, the town laid out and established a public street from Main to Summer street, called indifferently Market or New Market street. It had formerly extended only to the Blackstone canal, and had been known as Columbian avenue. Now Exchange street.

The present Market street, in which we are now most interested, was established by vote of the town on Nov. 8, 1847, accepting the street as laid out by the selectmen. The east line started at a point on Main street "seven

[1] Mr. Patch, in a deed, had called it Terry street, and Mr. Terry, not to be outdone in courtesy, had called it Patch street. Mr. Terry also called it Centre street.

feet and three inches northerly of the northwest corner of the underpinning of the house owned and occupied by Mrs. Sarah Porter, and forty-three feet southerly of the southwest corner of house occupied by Phinehas W. Wait, and ran S. 77½° E. 500 feet and S. 75° E. 360 feet to Summer street. The road is thirty feet wide, so that the southeast corner of the hotel is considerably within the lines of the street. Mrs. Porter was awarded two hundred and forty dollars for land and for the expense of moving a house in rear of her dwelling, which was over the line. To Sally, Eunice and Clarissa Sikes (owners of the hotel property), no damages were awarded, but they were allowed the right "to maintain the buildings now on the land as they are and until the same shall be rebuilt or removed." The street has been laid out for fifty-five years, and the hotel still stands in its old place.

Main street, according to Lincoln, was used as early as 1674, and constantly travelled over since the final settlement in 1713.

OLD LINCOLN STREET.—THE DANIEL HENCHMAN FARM.

The traveller who might have journeyed from Boston to Springfield some two hundred and fifty years ago, would have passed very near the spot where we are now assembled. If he had paused in his path over the present Institute road, at a point just north of the present site of Mr. Salisbury's dwelling-house, and turned his eyes to the eastward, he would have looked across the meadow of Mill Brook upon a beautiful hill clothed with the primeval forest. Perhaps he would have asked himself the question, What is to be the future of this peaceful tract; whence are to come the people who shall settle it; and how shall it be divided among them? The reports of such journeyers, that here was "a meet place for a plantation," led, after a few years, to the settlement of "Quinsigamond."

I purpose here to treat of that section of the future village upon which the eyes of my supposed traveller rested,—to tell who was its first owner, of some who came afterward, and how the land was subdivided. This matter of land titles is perhaps not one of general interest, but it is of some value withal; and the present owner of a house-lot on Lincoln street or its neighborhood may not be averse to being told something about those who owned it before him, and how he may trace his title back to the Indians who were settlers here before the white man came.

There is, in my mind, no other section of Worcester, of equal area, about which there is so much of interest and even of romance as the one of which I am speaking. Among those who had to do with the first settlement, whether as members of the committees appointed by the General

Court, or as the first settlers, Daniel Henchman shared with Daniel Gookin in prominence. Gookin's name was first on the original committee, but it was Henchman who, in 1684, formed the plan for a re-settlement; and the second allotment of lands was made by his order and only with his approbation.

Henchman died in 1685 (Oct. 15). More than thirty years after his death this minute was entered on the "Proprietors' Records":—

"Worcester, October 3d 1716. By order of the Honour[b] Committee, laid out to the Heirs of mr. Daniel Henchman fiveteen Ten acre Lotts on the East side of mill brook in Worcester. Country road runing thro some part of it as signified in the platt : with a Town high way running thro sd land in some convenient place, bounded westerly by sd brook in part & partly by comon, bounded partly north by land laid out on the right of Daniel Turell,[1] every way else by the undivided land as it is signified on the platt

Surveyed by David Haynes."

Two years later, there was laid out to "the heirs of Capt. Daniel Henchman deceased," two hundred and seventy-nine acres westward of Prospect hill, thirty and one-half acres on the north side of Holden road, and one hundred and four acres joining to said Henchman's house-lot and on the east and south sides of it. The grant of this last tract made up two hundred and fifty-four acres for the Lincoln street estate.

To find out who were "the heirs of Daniel Henchman," and how their respective shares passed, involved many visits to the registries of deeds and of probate in the counties of Suffolk, Middlesex and Worcester, much searching of the records in those places, and no little embarrassment in solving the knotty problems which were presented. The work had never been done before.

Mr. Henchman left no will. He was survived by his wife Mary, sons Richard, Hezekiah, Nathaniel, Daniel [2], and daughters Susannah (who married John Harris) and

[1] This Turell land was assigned to "Thomas Palmer, Esq., Messrs. John Oulton & Cornelius Waldo" Oct. 10, 1718, and later became a part of the Paine farm, lying north of the homestead, "The Oaks.".

Jane (who married James Varney). His estate was probated in Suffolk county, and his wife and the two first-named sons were his administrators.

Richard Henchman conveyed his share of his father's estate to his nephews DANIEL [3] and Samuel (sons of Hezekiah), and Samuel afterward sold to his brother DANIEL. This DANIEL [3] now assumes prominence in the ownership of the estate; for besides his getting the share of his uncle Richard, he was heir to that of his father Hezekiah; and his uncle Nathaniel in 1731 conveyed to him "all rights in all land of my father Major Daniel Henchman in Worcester."

Susannah (Henchman) Harris in 1725–6 sold to ISAAC BURR two-sevenths of 600 acres. (Her father, the pioneer, owned other tracts in Worcester than the one of which we are treating).

Now DANIEL, son of Hezekiah, our Daniel *par excellence*, had a cousin of the same name, the son of Daniel [2]. This other Daniel (a shipwright of Boston) sold to JAMES VARNEY, Jr., "my share, or one-eighth, of all my grandfather's land in Worcester"; this in 1730.

As Jane Henchman had married James Varney, the ownership of this Lincoln street farm, as it may be called, was now in the hands of Daniel [3] Henchman, Isaac Burr, James Varney in right of his wife, and James Varney, Jr.

In the year 1741, before the conveyance from Samuel Henchman to Daniel [3], the owners signed an agreement requesting Henry Lee, Daniel Heywood and Benjamin Flagg,—men of probity and prominence,—to divide the estate into four parts of equal areas or value. This partition was made, and a plan was made of the four sections, all crossing the country road or Lincoln street, with the dividing lines nearly parallel with the original north and south boundary lines of the whole tract. The north tract was allotted to the Varneys, father and son, the south tract to Isaac Burr, and the other two to the two Henchmans.

We will now follow the north tract, which began at about Harrington avenue and extended to the top of the hill, including the Paine homestead lot.[1]

James Varney of Boscawen, N. H., deeded one-half of the tract to John and Lydia Hancock in June, 1763. It would appear that this was the James Varney, Jr., previously mentioned, and that his deed to Timothy Paine conveyed only his share of the estate of his father and mother, and not his original share bought by the shipwright.

James Varney by his will, approved Jan. 31, 1732 (Suffolk), left his real estate to his son James, his daughters Jane, wife of John Tudor, and Bethesda, wife of John Aaron Boardman, and the children of his daughter Mary, wife of David Sigourney.[2] It appears that by the death of Bethesda Tudor her share passed to the other Varney heirs. I find deeds from John and Jane Tudor to Timothy Paine of four-thirtieths, and from James Varney [2] to Paine of seven-thirtieths. Four-thirtieths belonged to Mary Sigourney's heirs, and the remaining half to John and Lydia Hancock.

The time had come for a partition of this land, and in 1787 commissioners appointed by the Supreme Court of Judicature set off to Timothy Paine 9 acres and 67 rods on the west side of the street, bounded north on his other land, west by land of Waldo, and south by the Kelso road;[3] also 26 acres and 133 rods on the east side of the road, bounded north on Timothy Paine and Dr. Green, east on

---

[1] The boundaries of the several tracts as given in this paper are approximate rather than exact. From the data furnished and the references, it would be easy for a surveyor to determine the bounds.

[2] Grandson of Andrew Sigourney the Huguenot pioneer of Oxford.

[3] In 1765 the town accepted as a private way a road laid out by the Selectmen to accommodate John Kelso, beginning at his house (which was somewhere west of Lincoln street and south of Millbrook street), and "extending southerly across the plain of Timothy Paine, esq.," to the land of heirs of Cornelius Waldo, thence through said heirs' land to the heirs of Thomas Hancock and the land of Mr. Varney to the country road. Kelso bought his farm of John Oulton. In 1796 he had sold the principal part to Timothy Paine, and this bridle road was discontinued. It entered Lincoln street on about the line of the present Frederick street.

Millstone hill and south on a tract allotted to the Sigourney heirs.

To Lydia Hancock the commissioners gave one piece of 5 acres and 5 rods, "west of the great road," bounded north on the Kelso road, south on said Lydia's other land and west on Cornelius Waldo; also 15 acres, 157 rods on the east side of Lincoln street, bounded south by Lydia's other land, east on Millstone hill and north by land set off to the Mary Sigourney heirs.

To the heirs of Mary Sigourney was allotted a strip on the east side of Lincoln street of 6 acres, 95½ rods. This included Forest avenue and the tier of lots on its north side; it was 7½ rods wide on the street and about 140½ rods, or some 2321 feet deep, running back to Millstone hill. This peculiarly shaped tract was conveyed by Benjamin Jepson and Mary (wife), Elisha Sigourney, Peter Lemercier and Mary, and Daniel Sigourney (heirs of Mary Sigourney late of Boston), for £60 lawful money, to John Knower in 1782. In 1848 it was sold by John A. Knower of Accomack County, Va., and Jane Wygatt of Baltimore, grandchildren of John Knower (by their attorney Rejoice Newton), to James H. Wall and Edward Hemenway. These grantors were probably the children of John A. Knower (son of John), who was born in Worcester on Feb. 12, 1774.

We will now take up the central portion, about one-half of the Henchman farm, which, as we have seen, became the property of Daniel [3] Henchman, extending say from Harrington avenue to a little below Kendall street. His daughter Lydia had married Thomas Hancock of Quincy. Daniel [3] Henchman, by his will probated in Suffolk, March 6, 1761, left this Worcester property to his son-in-law Thomas Hancock and Lydia his wife, *i. e.*, an undivided half to each.[1] The title proved not to be entirely satis-

[1] In the first "returne of Lotts at Quansicmund survaid by David Fiske Surruayr don about the midst of April 1675," were included, "on the north side of Conecktitut road" [Lincoln street] westerly from the lake, grants to Benjamin [Thomas?] Hall

factory, for we find in the Worcester Registry of Deeds the petition of Thomas Hancock and Lydia his wife, to His Excellency Francis Barnard, Esq., Governor, *etc.*, reciting the facts of the former agreement with Varney and Burr, saying that before any deeds of division were signed, James Varney, Sr., died, and Samuel Henchman had conveyed to Daniel [3]; but said Daniel, accepting the division as final, "immediately proceeded and erected a large dwelling-house and barn on his share, and at large expense made considerable improvements on his lot"; wherefore they petitioned the Governor and General Court to ratify the agreement. After reference to a special committee a Resolve was reported, which passed the Council Feb. 24, 1763, and the House on the following day, confirming and establishing the division made Nov. 10, 1741. Thomas Hancock, by his will probated Aug. 10, 1764, after disposing of certain lands in Boston and New Hampshire, gave "all the residuum of my real estate to my nephew John Hancock"; and Lydia Hancock, by will probated Nov. 21, 1777, gave all her real estate to her nephew John Hancock. So this signer of the Declaration of Independence and future Governor of Massachusetts, became a landed proprietor of Worcester.

---

of 25 acres, David Gookin 50, Samuel Gookin (son unto Capt. Gookin) 25, Symon Meylins 25, Ephraim Curtis 50, Capt. Daniel Henchman 25, and Dr. Leonard Hoarr (President of Harvard College, who had died the month before) 25. The only ones of these who built houses under these grants were probably Ephraim Curtis and Thomas Hall. [Our President, Mr. Crane, thinks Mr. Hall built the first house in Worcester.] These grants were surrendered or lapsed from the failure of the grantees to build thereon. Although Capt. Henchman died at Boston, it seems probable that he had a residence here, perhaps on the tract which he had selected (though not then owner of the fee), and where his grandson, the Boston bookseller, erected the house which, as we have seen, passed to Gov. Hancock. The store of Daniel Henchman [3] was at the south corner of Washington and State streets, in Boston, *i. e.*, "Cornhill" and "King" street.

The "Memorial History of Boston," *ii.* 434, says:—"Daniel Henchman is called by Thomas the most eminent and enterprising bookseller that appeared in Boston, or indeed in all British America before 1775. Books were printed for him in London and Boston. It is alleged that the first Bible printed in America was printed for him. . . . . He built the first paper mill in New England, and in the intervals of his engrossing occupations bore his full share of the public burden like a good citizen." By his will he gave his Boston residence on Court street, west of the old Court House, as a parsonage for the Brattle Square Church.

The petition of Thomas Hancock fixes the time when the "Hancock mansion" [1] was built as shortly after 1741. Gov. Hancock sold the farm, "150 acres more or less," to Levi Lincoln the first, for £1200, April 26, 1782, and Mr. Lincoln lived there until his death, April 14, 1820. It is uncertain to what extent, if at all, the house was ever occupied by the Hancocks. For several years prior to its purchase by Mr. Lincoln it was occupied by Samuel Woodburn as a private hotel, and there is little doubt that it was visited, at least, by Gov. Hancock and his wife in the summer time. In a published memoir of John Hancock I find reference to a letter from him at Washington, addressed to "Mrs. Hancock at Worcester or Boston."

We have seen that the southern quarter of the Henchman farm became the property of Isaac Burr. Mr. Burr was the second settled minister of the church in Worcester, and filled the pulpit for twenty years, from 1725 to 1745. His residence was at the south corner of Main and Pleasant streets.

Mr. Burr sold to Thomas Stearns in 1730, "one-quarter of 224 acres," "the Hinksman farm," with the dwelling-house and barn standing thereon. At this time there had been no legal division of the tract, but there was evidently a tacit agreement as to how the division should be made. This Thomas Stearns was son of John Stearns, an early settler. He married a daughter of William Jennison, was landlord of the "King's Arms," and was a large owner of real estate. He sold to the County a lot on the west side of Lincoln street for a jail. He sold to John Chandler, Jr., in 1733, 40 acres, "with the house where he now dwells;" and the remaining 38 acres, in the rear, at the same time to William Jennison, who conveyed again to Mr. Chandler in 1739.

This John Chandler was second of the three of that name

[1] Now standing at the southeast corner of Grove and Lexington streets, removed there from its original site.

who wore the ermine in Worcester County. His father, who continued to reside in Woodstock after he became Judge, I call for distinction, Woodstock John. The second, who built the house still standing on the premises, who held high offices here from 1731 until 1762, I call Worcester John, and the latter's son John, who succeeded to the military, municipal and some of the judicial offices of his father, I call Refugee John.

The mention of the name of Chandler tempts one to launch out into an account of this remarkable family and the important part which they played in the affairs of Worcester. But their history has been given by William Lincoln, their kinsman Dr. George Chandler, and others. I cannot refrain, however, from calling attention to a touching and pathetic letter addressed by the refugee's daughter Lucretia, the wife of Rev. Aaron Bancroft, to her daughter, Mrs. Donato Gherardi, which, with comments by Mrs. Bancroft's grandsons Horace and Andrew McFarland Davis, is printed with the "Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society," for October, 1900. How the south portion of the Henchman farm was saved to the heirs of the refugee may be seen by a paper upon "Land Titles of the American Antiquarian Society," printed with their Proceedings for October, 1901.[1]

I have said that the history of this "north end" of our town was full of interest and of romance. My work, however, has been to deal with matters of fact. The romance and even the pathos are set forth more fully in the work of other writers.

The deed from Thomas Stearns to Judge Chandler conveys to the latter a tract of land with "the house where he now dwells." I am satisfied that this house is the one now standing at the corner of Lincoln square and Belmont

[1] Pages 383-4 and foot-notes, beginning with tenth line of page 383.

street.[1] At the death of "Worcester John" in 1762 it would become vacant. I discovered in the records of the Supreme Court at Boston a copy of the will of this Judge Chandler, which had escaped the notice of his biographers, and of which there was no record in the court over which he presided in this county.[2] By this will and subsequent grants and conveyances his whole farm passed to his grandson Samuel Chandler, who died in 1813, but had removed to Vermont several years previously. A deed from his executors to Edward Bangs, of the "Polly Whitney lot" on the east side of Lincoln street bounds the lot on the south by the "garden and mansion house late of Samuel Chandler." In 1782 it was occupied by the first Daniel Waldo and probably until his death in 1808. It was occupied by the second Levi Lincoln for two or three years after his marriage, and in 1819 was sold by Samuel Chandler's executors, with a large tract running up Belmont street on its north side, to Capt. Peter Slater,[3] who turned it into a hotel. Capt. Slater sold it, in 1819 to Carey Howard and William H. Howard.

[1] Wall's "Reminiscences" states that Worcester John built and occupied the house afterwards owned by Edward Earle, east of Summer street and south of Heardsleigh street. But he bought this land some five years later than the date of the Stearns deed.

In a notice of Charles and Samuel Chandler, sons of the refugee and grandsons of "Worcester John," which was read by Gov. Lincoln before the Worcester Fire Society in April, 1862, the ex-Governor says that the *Earle house* was built by *Samuel Chandler*. He also makes it clear that Worcester John's "spacious and substantial mansion," "having an extensive yard and beautiful lawn in front," was the building at the corner of the street and square, confirming my contention. The yard and lawn were in later times thrown into the square. Samuel Chandler could not have built the Earle house earlier than the very close of the 18th century. After the death of his father he came into possession of his grandfather's homestead, the "mansion house" at the corner. Gov. Lincoln adds that it was occupied for more than thirty years by Mr. Waldo, senior. Mr. Lincoln lived in the house for several years after Mr. Waldo, and unquestionably was acquainted with its history.

[2] A copy has since been filed in the Probate office here.

[3] One of the "Boston Tea Party." See Wall's "Reminiscences," pp. 211 and 340.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 014 079 627 A